

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 385 654

UD 030 547

AUTHOR Greene, Andrea; And Others
TITLE Evaluating Systemic Change in the National Head Start-Public School Transition Project: Perspectives from Five States.
PUB DATE Apr 95
NOTE 28p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Change; Cooperation; Demonstration Programs; Educationally Disadvantaged; Elementary Education; *Evaluation Methods; National Programs; *Partnerships in Education; *Preschool Education; Program Evaluation; *Public Schools; Supplementary Education; *Transitional Programs
IDENTIFIERS *Project Head Start

ABSTRACT

In 1991 the Department of Health and Human Services funded 32 sites throughout the United States to develop and implement Head Start-Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Projects. The purpose of 31 projects, which are in their fourth year of operation, is to stimulate partnerships among Head Start agencies, public schools, and community agencies and organizations in order to provide greater continuity for children and their parents as they make the transition from Head Start to the public schools. Each project identified a local comparison group. Projects and their comparisons were evaluated by local evaluating teams in collaboration with a National Research Coordinating Team using a developed list of operational questions and a set of instruments, the National Core Data Set. Five projects had developed evaluations with a strong partnership component featuring an iterative process in which information is gathered through multiple methodologies and perceptions are validated or corrected by the participating partners. As a work-in-progress, this paper explores the evaluations being conducted by five transition projects in Alaska, Arizona, Illinois, Nevada, and Oregon. These projects have made great strides in moving toward truly collaborative partnerships. One figure illustrates the evaluation approach. (Contains 10 references.) (SID)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

Evaluating Systemic Change in the National Head Start-Public School Transition Project: Perspectives from Five States

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it

☐ Minor changes have been made to
improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this
document do not necessarily represent
official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Andrea L. Greene
Morrison Inst. - ASU

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Andrea Greene
Deborah Loesch-Griffin
Sue Pinzur Rasher

with

Helen Barrett
Joanne Everts
Margo Gottlieb
Lare
Tim Speth

Interactive Symposium Presented at the

American Educational Research Association 19 Annual Meeting

April 18-22, San Francisco

UD 030 547

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Background	2
Review of the Literature	2
Partnership Evaluation	5
Perspectives from Five States	6
Description of Sites	6
Methods and Techniques	8
Preliminary Findings	14
Challenges for the Future	22
Conclusions	23
References	25

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Evaluating Systemic Change in the National Head Start-Public School Transition Project: Perspectives from Five States

Introduction

In 1991, the U.S. Congress authorized the Department of Health and Human Services to fund 32 sites throughout the country to develop and implement Head Start-Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Projects. At present, 31 of these projects are in the fourth year of operation.

The purpose of the demonstration projects is to stimulate partnerships among Head Start agencies, public schools, and community agencies/organizations in order to provide children and families with greater continuity as they make the transition from Head Start into the public schools. Each of the 31 projects had a planning year to develop a unique transition program applicable to its population and community across four common strands: implementation of developmentally appropriate practices, parent involvement, health and wellness, and social support services. The importance of transition to school, and the inter-organizational structures that need to be in place to support such transition, are discussed in the Background section of this paper.

Each project, along with its local evaluation research team, belongs to the National Transition Consortium which is charged with designing, implementing, and evaluating strategies for improving the way Head Start and the public schools provide services for children and families from pre-kindergarten through the primary grades. Each project identified schools, school districts, or classrooms within a designated service area, and then randomly assigned them to a demonstration (treatment) or comparison group.

Local evaluation teams worked with a National Research Coordinating Team to develop a list of operational questions and a set of instruments, the National Core Data Set, that would be universally used at all 31 sites. The national data are comprised primarily of quantitative measures of child and family outcomes. In addition to cooperating with the national evaluation effort, each local evaluation team was charged with developing an evaluation plan that documents and evaluates the implementation of the local project. The study is designed to continue through 1997 when two cohorts of children will have completed third grade.

Within the National Transition Consortium, five local evaluation teams discovered that they had independently developed evaluations with a strong partnership component; that is, the evaluation team works in a partnership relationship with program staff to design and implement an evaluation that gathers meaningful and useful formative and summative data. Essential to partnership evaluation is the iterative process whereby information is gathered utilizing multiple methodologies, and perceptions are validated and in some cases corrected by the participating partners; the evaluation proceeds based on what has

been learned, and the iterative process continues. The five evaluation teams formed a Partnership Evaluation Subgroup, which provided the researchers opportunities for sharing methodologies and techniques across sites, and for discussing emerging philosophical issues and challenges. A key research question about systemic change was formulated by the subgroup and was added to the five members' individual local evaluation plans; eventually this question also was added to the national research plan:

As a result of participation in Transition Projects, what institutional and system wide changes are evident? Specifically, what systemic changes are noted among the various partners of the transition collaborative? What systemic changes occur "naturally" in comparison schools? What are the outside influences encouraging or limiting systemic change?

This symposium explores the above question within the unique parameters of five Transition Projects located in Alaska, Arizona, Illinois, Nevada, and Oregon comprising the Partnership Evaluation Subgroup, as well as within the broader context in which all 31 projects are implemented. This paper represents a work-in-progress, rather than a final product, which examines systemic change after three years of program implementation.

Background

Review of the Literature

At least two recent national studies (Love, Logue, Trudeau & Thayer, 1992; Seppanen, Godin, Metzger, Bronson & Cichon, 1993) have focused on the transition from preschool to public school and the systems that need to be in place in support of this transition. Both studies found that very few children experience any type of formal transition into kindergarten, and the authors suggest that a lack of stable institutional partnerships is one factor that impedes smooth transitions for young children.

The Head Start-Public School Transition Project is designed to foster institutional collaborations that will result in continuity for children and families from Head Start as they enter the public schools. The goal of the project is to achieve a more cohesive philosophical base, curricular continuity, and an integrated system of service delivery. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary for Head Start agencies and school systems to establish strong organizational collaborations.

Although the collaboration literature is quite new, several authors have laid the groundwork for defining the critical attributes of a "true" collaboration. Melaville and Blank (1991, 1993) define collaborative partnerships as having the following characteristics:

- Common goals are established among organizations to solve shared problems.
- The partners jointly plan, implement, and evaluate new services and procedures.

- Participating organizations make a mutual commitment of resources to achieve the goals, often through leveraging funds.
- The organizations make needed changes in their existing policies, procedures, and/or budgets in order to achieve the goals.
- The organizations take individual and collective responsibility for outcomes.
- The collaborative effort results in substantive improvements (i.e., changes) in the quality of service delivery.

These collaborative characteristics are distinguished from partnerships that are more cooperative in nature. In cooperative partnerships, the partners help each other meet their respective organizational goals; they network, share information, and coordinate existing services to make them more comprehensive. The partners maintain autonomy, with individual rules, policies, and governance structures remaining intact. Organizational representatives may advocate for, but are not empowered to negotiate, policy changes. Finally, the partners have an advisory rather than a decision-making role.

Other elements of successful collaborative partnerships have been elaborated by Jehl and Kirst (1993). Using the New Beginnings collaboration (San Diego City Schools, the City and County of San Diego, the San Diego Community College District, and the San Diego Housing Commission) as an example of a successful process, they posit that there must be shared ownership for any collaborative effort. This shared ownership includes shared governance at the highest levels of the participating organizations. If the process of developing integrated services is viewed as an effort for one agency to fulfil its individual agenda, the process is doomed to fail.

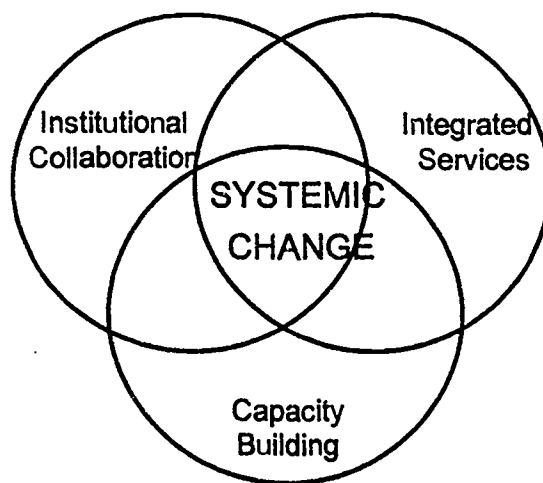
Gardner (1993) discusses similar collaborative attributes. He notes the tendency toward "projectitis" which occurs when new programs are added to existing systems without developing the mechanisms to expand successful innovations and improve outcomes. Projectitis takes over when the small details of implementing a project override the institutional policy considerations that are necessary for organizational change. Like Jehl and Kirst, Gardner argues that no one agency can "own" a project, because the other partners will retreat and leave decisions up to the owner. Project management needs to occur through horizontal partnerships among organizations that depend upon each other; otherwise, there may be a temporary improvement in service delivery, but the institutions remain intact, "in a comfortable but inadequate status quo." According to Gardner, short term funding threatens the stability of collaborative partnerships because it does not provide a mechanism for building the organizational capacity needed to sustain innovative programs.

This paper is based on the premise that *integrated service delivery* and *capacity building* go hand-in-hand with *institutional collaboration*. Integrated services are preceded by, or occur simultaneously with, the collaboration among school, community, and project

personnel. Integrated services are the mechanisms for translating collaboration into comprehensive, preventive, and family-centered programs. They are connected by a single point of entry, usually an individual provider, who advocates for families by building on their strengths, mutually identifying needs and goals, and developing opportunities for families to contribute to and participate in systems as well as to access needed services.

Capacity building in this study is defined as putting into place within organizations the resources, skills, policies, and philosophy that can sustain innovative and integrated programs. For the Transition Projects, this translates to sustaining school-based family support programs inclusive of developmentally appropriate practice (curriculum, instruction, and assessment), parent involvement, health and wellness, and social support services. Capacity building requires true collaboration, as described above. It is particularly dependent upon flexible allocation of existing or new resources, ongoing professional development, and inter- and intra-organizational communication structures that are evident at all levels of the organization.

The three interactive processes of **collaboration, integrated service delivery, and capacity building**, illustrated below, provide the conceptual framework that has been applied to evaluating institutional collaboration in five programs within the Head Start-Public School Transition Project.



Model for Assessing Systemic Change in Transitions to Public School

These three elements are believed to be requisite for systemic organizational change. The elements are not linear, but rather interrelated and iterative, and constitute an ongoing process that can result in systemic change within the participating organizations. The challenge for evaluators of Head Start-Public School Transition Projects has been to develop qualitative and quantitative methods for examining these complex processes as they unfold within diverse programs implemented in a variety of political and organizational contexts.

Partnership Evaluation

The subgroup of states represented in this paper originally formed because each operated from a common evaluation philosophy and design – what the subgroup calls “partnership evaluation.” Within a partnership evaluation the process of inquiry is as critical, if not more so, than the product (Whitmore, 1991). The process of a partnership evaluation is an empowerment process, in which participants have an opportunity to define the questions, receive informal and formal feedback, and make decisions about program processes and directions based on an exchange of information between the evaluators and the program staff. The process of the evaluation should mirror the purposes of the program; evaluators are respectful of the participants and their values as well as their needs for specific information. In some instances, data collection might be carried out through the participants and program staff in an effort to be less intrusive into the implementation process. In other cases, instrumentation is developed in conjunction with participants and staff to serve both the purposes of program documentation and planning as well as evaluation goals.

Unlike more traditional research and evaluation designs, partnership evaluation is marked by its evolutionary nature – methodology and questions emerge as program processes evolve and as preliminary findings reveal new directions and program impacts not identified at the outset of the process. In short, partnership evaluation is dynamic, empowering, and participatory. It poses the challenge for evaluators to maintain both a stringent, systematic, and objective orientation throughout data collection and analysis, and a personal and fluid orientation throughout ongoing communications and planning activities with participants and program staff.

Common to all of the projects in these five states are program/evaluation partnership meetings, which serve as an ongoing communication mechanism between program and evaluation teams. These meetings consist of an informational exchange at regular intervals during the planning and implementation years and are a defining characteristic of partnership evaluations. The meetings reflect an iterative process or feedback loop that links data collection, analysis, and reporting activities back to the program’s design and implementation process. The purpose of these meetings is threefold:

- 1) to provide a regular forum for exchanging information about program and evaluation issues such as program documentation or data collection;

- 2) to provide a forum for discussing data analysis, validation, triangulation, and interpretation prior to publishing findings in formal reports;
- 3) to discuss recommendations for program and evaluation directions that insure both parties that information which is collected is being used and that it has value (i.e., information reflects the changing goals and activities of the program as it evolves over the course of the project).

The meetings are central to maintaining the relationship between the program and evaluation teams and to the integrity of the research. The partnership evaluation framework provides the context for the development, selection and implementation of a variety of qualitative and quantitative methodologies used in each of the five studies. Because the partnership evaluation focuses primarily on process, qualitative methodologies tend to dominate the five local studies.

Perspectives from Five States

At present, the Transition Projects are operating in their third year of implementation. The five evaluation teams that are part of the Partnership Evaluation Subgroup have individually and collectively developed evaluation methods and data collection techniques to assess elements of systemic change including institutional collaboration, integrated service delivery, and capacity building. The remainder of this report briefly describes the five sites, the methodologies and data collection techniques used within the partnership evaluation framework, preliminary findings, and challenges for the future.

Description of Sites

All five sites were awarded grants to develop and implement Head Start-Public School Transition Demonstration Projects during the 1991-92 school year. The first year was a planning year; thus, actual implementation began in 1992-93. For two sites, Alaska and Illinois, the public school district is the fiscal agent; for the remaining three – Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon – the local Head Start agency is the fiscal agent.

All five sites are longitudinally following a sample of Head Start students and families as they transition from Head Start to the public schools. Two cohorts are being studied: Cohort 1 students are currently in grade 2, and Cohort 2 students are currently in grade 1. Four of the five sites are also following a smaller, matched non-Head Start sample. Each site varies regarding the number of school districts and schools involved and racial/ethnic characteristics of their populations. These are summarized briefly below.

Alaska. The Alaska evaluation involves eleven elementary schools located in the Municipality of Anchorage that spans an area of approximately 2,000 square miles, and has an urban/suburban population of 225,000. The Anchorage School District is the grantee which operates 55 elementary schools. Five of these schools are

involved as demonstration sites that receive transition services; six schools serve as comparison sites. Nine of the schools serve families in low-income areas of the urban area, eight of which are designated Title 1 schools; two schools are in a suburban community ten miles from the city center. The schools in the Anchorage School District vary in racial/ethnic percentages and family income, with more than 100 languages represented within the student population, which includes some 30 percent minority students: Caucasian, 70.1%; African American, 8.9%; Alaska Native or American Indian, 10.5%; Asian or Pacific Islander, 6.6%; and Latino, 4.0%. The site has a high mobility rate: one third of the families participating in the study have moved within the last year.

Arizona. The Arizona evaluation includes six elementary schools (two schools from each of three separate elementary school districts) located within the city of Phoenix, a metropolitan area of about two million people. Three of the schools are demonstration sites that receive transition services; three additional schools serve as comparison sites. The schools serve large numbers of low income and minority children. When averaged across the six participating schools, approximately 87% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch programs. Averaged ethnic/racial percentages show 75% minority enrollments, including: Latino, 57%; Caucasian, 25%; African American, 8%; American Indian, 9%; Asian, 1%. The median family income for study participants is approximately \$8,400 per year. The families are very mobile, with about half reporting that they have lived at their current address for less than two years.

Illinois. The Illinois evaluation includes 17 elementary schools from three school districts in the Elgin/Carpentersville area. The three geographically adjacent school districts are located approximately 40 miles west of Chicago, and include urban, suburban, and rural areas which both politically and economically function independently from the Chicago metropolitan area. Eight of the schools are demonstration sites that receive transition services; nine additional schools serve as comparison sites. Schools vary regarding racial/ethnic percentages and family income, with some having considerably larger African American or Latino populations than others; the overall percentages for the 17 schools are: Caucasian, 61%; Latino, 24%; African American, 12%; and Asian, 3%. The overall percentage of low income students in the 17 schools is 32%, with a mean yearly mobility rate of 28%.

Nevada. The Nevada evaluation includes 21 elementary schools from two school districts in Washoe and Churchill counties, which include both urban and rural communities. Six of the schools are demonstration sites that receive transition services; 15 additional schools serve as comparison sites. Schools vary regarding racial/ethnic percentages and family income; the overall percentages for the 21 schools are: Caucasian, 69%; Latino, 15%; Native American, 6%; Asian, 5%; and African American, 4%. In the project schools, the racial/ethnic composition varies greatly, with some schools having over 50% Latino enrollments. The average

mobility rate is 32% and the average percentage of children eligible for free or reduced lunches is 46.5%.

Oregon. The Oregon evaluation includes eight elementary schools located within the city of Portland, a metropolitan area of about one and one-half million people. Four of the schools are demonstration sites that receive transition services; four additional schools serve as comparison sites. The schools serve large numbers of low income and minority children; 73% of the students are enrolled in the free lunch program. Overall racial/ethnic percentages are: African American, 46%; Caucasian, 41%; Latino, 5%; Asian, 6%; and Native American, 2%. The yearly mobility rate is 26%.

Methods and Techniques

Although each site employs its own evaluation design using a range of methods and techniques to measure systemic change, all include four common themes: 1) use of a qualitative/naturalistic partnership evaluation model; 2) evaluation of the degree of collaboration among participating organizations; 3) evaluation of the delivery of integrated services; and 4) assessment of the status of capacity building. Inherent in the design of the projects is the collaboration of Head Start agencies, public schools, and community agencies in developing a transition program. The five evaluation teams work in partnership with the program teams, ensuring that key aspects of program implementation are captured. This necessitates the gathering of qualitative and observational data, as well as more quantitative measurement of program effects. All five evaluation teams define a successful transition program as one in which systemic change has occurred. Without systemic change, the collaborations stop functioning once grant funds are terminated or once the cohorts move beyond grade 3.

Each site uses multiple methods to study the nature of the collaborations and extent of systemic change that results from the implementation of its Transition Project. The following methods are employed by all, or four of the five, sites:

- Key collaborator interviews
- Classroom observations
- Program documentation
- Participant surveys
- Participant observation
- Focus or process groups
- Narratives

In this section, each of the above methods is described, along with an example of how one of the local sites employs the methodology.

Key Collaborator Interviews. Several sites utilize a key collaborator interview to obtain the perceptions of a sample of key players in the Transition Projects on issues

relating to collaboration. Key collaborators are interviewed, either individually or in small groups, to gather information about perceptions of program implementation, program strengths, areas for improvement, and to identify institutional changes occurring as a result of the Transition Project. These interviews are typically conducted at the school or Head Start sites and include principals, Transition Coordinators, Family Service Coordinators, teachers, Governing Board members, and others who are involved in or associated with the Transition Projects.

Key collaborator interviews are a primary method of assessing institutional change within the Alaska and Oregon projects. The Alaska project uses five to seven questions to assess change, while the Oregon project uses a 25 item questionnaire and a 10 question interview to assess key players' perceptions of level of collaboration and institutional change. The interviews are conducted yearly to elicit who and what are the change agents in the process within the project and institutions. Components of the project and the intended effects emanating from the project are woven into the questions to qualitatively measure these changes. Each key collaborator (8 to 14 key players in Alaska and 17 to 35 in Oregon) is asked the same set of questions. The responses are transcribed and analyzed to find common themes, document perceptions of the key collaborators, and note substantive differences among the respondents. By repeating the interview periodically it is possible to detect changes in the collaborative process and identify systemic change over time.

Although labor intensive, both the respondents and the evaluators have viewed the interviews as one of the most effective methods of assessing the systemic changes taking place as a result of the Transition Projects. In addition, the results of the interviews offer a view of the current state of each project and provide insights into future directions of program activities.

Classroom Observations. All five sites have used the observation of study classrooms as one methodology to document systemic change. The adoption of developmentally appropriate practices by Transition teachers and schools is the centerpiece of the educational component of the project. To capture the extent of implementation over time and the schools' efforts toward the institutionalization of these practices, members of the Illinois evaluation team devote approximately one day per school each spring to the collection of observational data. Trained professionals, familiar with the classroom setting, conduct a direct and naturalistic assessment of this aspect of institutional change.

Varied instrumentation, identified in the local evaluation plan, serves as the means for obtaining a comprehensive view of primary classrooms. All measures are reviewed by the local Evaluation Advisory Board, composed of parents, teachers, facilitators, administrators, and researchers, prior to data gathering. Likewise, principals and teachers are informed of their respective roles in the evaluation, and visitation schedules are arranged at their convenience. The multiple and varied classroom observation techniques used by the local evaluation team capture the idiosyncratic nuances of individual teachers

and schools as well as more broad-based, universal strategies that are indicative of systemic change.

The use of multiple classroom observation instruments as data sources in Illinois allows for a rich and full description of developmentally appropriate practice. Formal measures and observer narratives each contribute to the local data set. A dichotomous classroom scale, the *Assessment Profile: Research Version* (Abbott-Shim & Sibley, 1992) is the nationally designated tool. In addition, classroom level data are obtained during observations using the following locally developed techniques: 1) a classroom observation checklist; 2) classroom and school narratives; and 3) *A Developmentally Appropriate Practice Template-ADAPT* (Gottlieb, 1995). The latter includes a holistic series of continua encompassing three domains (curriculum and instruction, interaction, and classroom management) and an overall classroom summary. Originally developed by the Illinois site, ADAPT was subsequently expanded and adopted as an optional national observation tool.

Program Documentation. In each of the five states, data are derived directly from existing documentation developed by program staff, such as case files and quarterly reports, or developed in conjunction with staff to assess specific program activities and processes unique to their state's program. An example of the latter is illustrated in Nevada's approach to documenting the role of the Family Service Coordinator (FSC) as it evolved from a direct provider to individual families through home-based services, to program developer and school staff member. During the planning year (1991-92) the Nevada evaluation team, in conjunction with program staff, developed a "contact log" to capture the breadth of activities and contacts that the FSC's made as they first were introduced to the schools (September-November, 1992) and as they ended their first year in the schools (April-June, 1993). Estimates were made regarding the number of contacts and types of contacts for the entire year, based on the two 3-month time samples.

Toward the end of the second year of program implementation, the evaluation team met with the FSC's to share their analysis of the contact log data and the categories of service derived from the analysis. They also presented a draft of a revised form that would allow the FSC's to more easily identify the nature of their contacts with families and other personnel in a standardized manner. The FSC's agreed to use the contact log if it could simultaneously serve as a form for their monthly reports to project management. Additional service categories were identified and coded, based on the evolution of new roles and activities during the second year of the program.

The purpose of both stages of the contact log was to document overall program activities and service priorities as well as the degree to which staff was collaborating and integrating services with school and community staff on behalf of the families served. According to the program's management, school administrators and personnel, and validated by observations and interviews conducted by the evaluation team, the FSC's in Nevada "are the program." Therefore, it was imperative for the Nevada evaluation team to understand and document the nature of the FSC's role as it evolved over the course of the project. The contact sheet was not a tool to identify which families received which

services, but rather how many families were served, the nature of those services and the level of collaboration (contact with other personnel) that was involved in integrating and delivering those services. By the third year of program implementation, the contact log is now used consistently by Family Service Coordinators as both a program documentation and evaluation tool, providing a 100% sampling of activities they engage in throughout the year.

Participant Surveys. Participant surveys have been developed by each of the five states' evaluation teams. Participant surveys were often constructed to gather a systematic and inclusive sampling of data about particular issues or program processes. Participant surveys include both rating scales and open-ended questions on such topics as parent involvement, classroom practices, teacher and administrator beliefs, and pre- and post-training expectations and perceptions.

In Arizona and Nevada, the Concerns-Based Adoption Model-CBAM (Hall & Hord, 1987) provided a framework for assessing program implementation and progress. This framework has been used widely to facilitate and implement innovative change in schools. In the Nevada and Arizona studies, the model was adapted for purposes of evaluating levels of change associated with the transition innovations.

Innovations Configuration (IC) is one of the three major elements of CBAM. The purpose of the IC is to describe exactly what an innovation would look like when implemented in its most ideal form, as well as variations that might be likely to be used by practitioners who are charged with using the innovation on a day-to-day basis. Collaborative interviews between the program evaluators and directors during the first year of project implementation resulted in the development and refinement of detailed descriptions of program components. These descriptions of the innovation components and the variations of each component became tools which practitioners used to report where they were in relation to the use of the innovation.

Nevada's efforts resulted in a single Innovation Component Checklist that measures four components: family services, family-friendly schools, partnerships, and child and family education. Arizona's instruments focus on three components: developmentally appropriate practice, the teachers' role in transition services, and the family advocates' role in transition services. For each component, three possible variations of program implementation are described which are inclusive of the spectrum from no implementation to full implementation. Each component is rated by a respondent on a 1 to 5 scale, with '1' reflecting minimal levels of implementation and '5' reflecting the ideal implementation level.

The IC has been a valuable tool in the evaluation of the Nevada and Arizona Transition Projects. It has helped provide documentation of how teachers and FSC's (called Family Advocates in Arizona), the key project implementers, perceive implementation of the various project components. IC results have assisted program staff

in identifying program areas of particular strength as well as areas that may need more emphasis or development.

Participant Observation. Several of the sites in the partnership evaluation subgroup have used participant observation to gather data about program evolution and the process of institutional collaboration. Participant observation is defined in this study as the evaluator participating in key program meetings and activities on a regular and ongoing basis. The evaluator attends meetings, making observational notes that are relevant to the development of the program in its natural context. Such notes might include capturing discussions between and among participating staff members, documenting changes or evolution in how services are designed or delivered, or describing a change over time in a particular individual or a school as a whole. These meetings also provide the evaluator with opportunities to have informal dialogue about the program with Transition and school staff, to update staff about upcoming evaluation activities, and to obtain input from staff about evaluation concerns or issues.

In Nevada and Arizona, for example, the evaluators have been participant-observers of school Transition Team meetings for the past three years. These school-based teams are comprised of Transition classroom teachers, Transition Family Advocates (or FSC's), Head Start staff, school support staff (e.g., counselors, social workers), school administrators, and Transition Project directors. Transition Team meetings are designed as a mechanism for key program implementers within each participating school – the front line – to communicate about both logistical and more substantive programmatic issues. Kindergarten and Head Start teachers might plan and schedule joint activities, the project director might inform teachers of upcoming professional development opportunities, or the group might engage in problem solving related to one of the program components. For example, one Arizona Transition Team meeting focused on how teachers and Family Advocates can plan specific strategies for increasing parent volunteers in the classroom. The Family Services manager suggested a strategy that had been effective at another Transition site, and the group brainstormed and decided upon several new activities that would be put into place during the next month.

Through observing these meetings, the evaluator becomes intimately familiar with the day-to-day successes and challenges that occur in the course of implementing the Transition Project, thus developing a deep understanding of what the program is about. Program is therefore not viewed as "a treatment" which is administered in isolation, but rather as a dynamic and complex set of activities and people interacting in a natural context – the school. The unique qualities, characteristics and nuances of each site are able to be observed and documented. Through the ongoing observation process, the evaluator formulates new questions that might need to be incorporated into the evaluation design. What is the role of the principal at each school site? How does that role influence the relative success of the program in that school? Has communication among staffs from Head Start and the schools improved over the course of program implementation? Is there a particular challenge at one site that has not been evident at others? Why?

The data collected through these observations and the associated documentation are qualitative in nature, providing a richness that is not possible when the evaluator is an outsider who simply "measures effects." Participant-observer data is extremely useful in helping the evaluator to interpret quantitative findings. For example, why might parents from one Transition school rate certain program activities much higher than parents from another Transition school? Why do teachers at one school seem to be making substantial progress in implementing developmentally appropriate practice when the teachers at another are struggling? Through the analysis of participant-observer documentation, many of these contextual questions can be answered with more confidence and understanding by the evaluator.

Focus or Process Groups. Focus groups have been used by several of the sites as a qualitative evaluation method that lends important context and meaning to the interpretation of quantitative data. Focus groups typically consist of eight to 12 individuals who are stakeholders in some aspect of the Transition Project: parents, teachers, project staff, or administrators. They are conducted to discuss a particular topic related to a research or evaluation question, under the direction of a facilitator or moderator. At some sites, focus groups are formalized and occur at a point-in-time, usually at the end of the project year. At other sites, the focus groups have evolved into "process groups" which meet on an ongoing, regular basis, to discuss Transition issues and reflect on the process of program implementation.

The use of focus groups as a methodology for program evaluation is based on the assumption that the perspectives, insights, issues and concerns of stakeholders in a project being evaluated are valid and meaningful to the research (cf. Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Focus group data can result in the identification of consensus or conflict about the program being evaluated and this information can be used to refine the evaluation questions and design. In the Arizona project, for example, focus groups are held once each year with parents, family advocates, teachers, school administrators, and Head Start managers. An observer/recorder takes notes of key focus group topics and comments; in addition, the sessions are audiotaped and transcribed.

The information gathered through focus groups is rich and complex. It is invaluable in capturing personal perspectives of people holding various roles in the project and in providing a full spectrum of views regarding process issues such as collaboration among the partners and institutionalization of program practices. Focus group data are shared informally with the project director so that the feedback can be used in making program modifications in a timely manner. The information is also incorporated into annual evaluation reports.

Narratives. Narratives are periodically written responses to a set of questions or topics by key participants that are collected and analyzed by the evaluation team. These may take the form of open-ended logs or more structured responses to questionnaires, but must include the respondent's reflections or interpretations, rather than just a listing of activities or events. Narratives may be gathered on a weekly, monthly, or even yearly

basis; at least three narratives should be completed over the lifetime of a project so changes over time can be captured.

Towards the end of the planning year (1991-92), the Illinois evaluation team met with project staff to develop *The Personal Reflection Instrument*, which addresses a key local evaluation question concerning evolving conceptualization: *How is Project TRANSFER defined at the local and national level and how do these definitions change over the time of the project?* Every month, all project staff complete the instrument, which asks respondents to describe the project's focus that month, the most positive or satisfying aspect of the project that month, and the most disappointing or unsatisfying aspect that month. The instrument takes approximately five minutes to complete; the first administration was in July 1991, and data have continued to be gathered monthly throughout the life of the project.

By examining staff's monthly focus, as well as key successes and challenges, the nature of collaboration and extent of systemic change can be assessed. As collaborative efforts expand, staff focus changes. At the beginning of the project, staff looked upon its services solely from the point of view of the project. The current evolving conceptualization views the project as part of an integrated network which delivers services to families within the target area. The detailed qualitative nature of the data permit evaluators to pinpoint key time periods where conceptualizations change. By matching these data to other program documentation, evaluators can discover events that precipitate change, as well as document change as it occurs. Serendipitously, program staff use the evaluators' monthly summations of the data as a means of program improvement. Thus, an instrument developed under the rubric of a partnership evaluation has proven helpful to program and evaluation alike.

Preliminary Findings

Using the techniques described above as well as others, each site has identified preliminary findings regarding institutional collaboration, integrated services, and capacity building. Selected findings from each site are discussed below.

Institutional Collaboration.

Alaska. The most evident progress toward institutionalizing systemic change is the establishment of an institutional alliance between the Anchorage School District, Head Start agencies, and other community resources. This alliance has adopted a common philosophy, coordinated transition procedures, and comprehensive services for Head Start and low income families.

The common vision, the shared commitment, and the mutual respect and trust are the building blocks leading to collaboration found in the Alaska project. This fundamental change in attitude, approach and belief are currently found both

laterally and horizontally within the major institutions directly involved with the Transition Project.

Arizona. The Arizona Head Start-Public School Transition Project has forged several collaborative efforts among the Head Start agency and the three Transition schools and their districts. Although there had been some level of communication between Head Start and the schools prior to the Transition Project, it was not systematic and tended to involve a limited number of people. For example, Head Start communicated with schools regarding transitioning special needs children and families into public school programs, but there was little communication about "regular" Head Start children. Examples of progress that has been made in increasing institutional collaboration in the Arizona project are described below.

Teachers in one Transition school became interested in developing the family literacy concept at their site. The Transition Project was able to support several school staff members to attend a family literacy conference to expand their knowledge of this concept. The school staff, in collaboration with Head Start and Transition staff and district office personnel, then wrote a proposal for an Even Start Family Literacy and Preschool grant. The collaborative effort also involves the Phoenix Union High School District Adult Education Division which provides the adult education classes. The proposal was funded and the program is in its second year of implementation at the school.

The community representatives to the Transition Governing Board are another indicator of the broad scope of the collaborative effort within the project. These representatives from state agencies, social service agencies, and universities, have provided numerous ideas for community linkages with the Transition Project and have created a community-wide awareness of the need for an expanded concept of preschool to school transitions. Finally, the Arizona Transition Project has planned a Summer Collaboration Institute to provide an opportunity for collective thinking and decision making among all the Transition partners about how to sustain and support Transition practices on a permanent basis.

Illinois. In 1992, Project TRANSFER began to build a framework for agency collaboration in the Elgin-Carpentersville area. Supplemental support was received from the State under the Governor's Project Success initiative. A strong network of agencies has been formed, resulting in numerous collaborative efforts. One example includes the coupling of mental health with drug and alcohol prevention agencies in three schools in two target school districts to implement FAST and FASTWORKS programs for families in English and Spanish. This program has been so successful, that the Illinois Peruvian Medical Society gave one district additional funds for its continuation, and several new FAST groups are being formed this year.

Other examples of social services collaboration include the expansion of GED, ESL, and other course offerings by Elgin Community College in the Elgin-Carpentersville area, and the establishment of a WIC office at one target school. The STAR (Sit Together and Read) Program has been implemented at the Dundee Township Public Library, which includes transportation provided by one school district and the leadership of the project Adult Education Facilitator as well as a target classroom teacher. Expanded summer camp programs were offered, as a result of collaborative efforts between the Dundee Township Park District and Project TRANSFER staff. A recent evaluation report (OER Associates, Technical Report #458, 1994) indicates that target schools have considerably more contact with community agencies than do comparison schools. In April, 1994, one target school district was one of eight finalists in the nation for The Scholastic Inc./National Alliance of Business Community Award for Excellence in Education for its management of schools, early childhood programs, and cooperation with social agencies and the Chamber of Commerce.

Agency and organizational collaboration has been spurred by the agencies' participation in the Local Governing Board, and the affiliated Local Wellness and Education Advisory Boards. These policy-making bodies afford agencies and organizations the opportunity to pool their resources for the benefit of the community. In addition, the project has provided a focus for service delivery.

Nevada. Collaboration is demonstrated within and across many levels of the project in Nevada. Collaboration at the school level is demonstrated through the existence of transition teams and multi-disciplinary team meetings or community consortiums, where membership includes direct service providers and parents--teachers, family service coordinators, counselors, nurses, Chapter I (now Title I) staff, and community agency staff. These teams participate in school-based implementation decisions, planning and allocation of resources. At the agency level, a transition resource team meets regularly to plan, trouble shoot and problem solve cross-site issues. Membership at this level includes the evaluators, the project directors, LEA administrators, and parent representatives. At the governance level, where hiring and funding decisions are made, is the Transition Governance Board, comprised of 51% parents, community leaders, the fiscal agents' administration, representatives from the Board of Directors, an evaluation representative, and project staff.

Nevada has achieved collaboration at each level, and at this stage of project implementation its collaborative efforts have been characterized by five of the six characteristics identified by Melaville and Blank. A strong foundation for inter- and intra-organizational planning and goal-setting has been established with the three partnership structures (described above) providing a regular forum for communicating among the various participants. Early in the project, Nevada's program staff (directors and Family Service Coordinators) invited not only kindergarten teachers, but first through third grade teachers and related resource

personnel to participate in "transition teams". Although the FSC's facilitated the meetings, the process emphasized joint planning and collective responsibility for transition outcomes, including decisions about how to allocate resources to achieve those outcomes—the FSC's time, project monies, and curriculum materials associated with the project. By including the first through third grade teachers, their understanding of the project and their role in working with families and children was developed long before the children came to their classes. As one teacher commented, "as the program has extended to more grade levels, more and more people are involved and I feel the partnership is growing stronger".

Collectively, the comments from a variety of school partners indicated that capacity-building activities, in particular joint trainings between Head Start and primary elementary school teachers, and the transition team meetings promoted trust and shared communication essential to true collaboration. The joint trainings offered the "opportunity to share and learn together with Transition staff and Head Start teachers", while the transition teams provided opportunities that another teacher described as, "We have gotten to know more and more people...lots of respect between all...We are moving in the right direction. I feel certain there is trust and respect among and between the programs, judging by the sensitive, caring people involved."

Oregon. Multiple examples of collaboration are exhibited in the Oregon Transition Project. The most notable example of institutional collaboration is the shared vision of transition services between Head Start agencies, Portland Public Schools, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, and other community organizations. This shared vision is evident in the communication, decision making, problem solving, service provision, and common philosophies of the collaborative group. This most fundamental aspect of collaboration has set the tone for further collaboration and has directed the project in its efforts to integrate services and build capacity.

Another example of collaboration includes monthly meetings of the Management Team, made up of the evaluation staff, Head Start representatives, and Portland Public School representatives, where **joint** decisions are made about program issues or concerns. In addition, the Governing Board is made up of parents, community representatives, project staff and evaluation staff. This Board is responsible for the hiring, funding, and programmatic decisions of the Transition Project. Both groups offer a forum for regular and representative communication.

A final example of collaboration takes place at the school level. Meetings with project teachers to discuss program and data issues have been attended by school staff who are not associated with the project. The meetings are scheduled for kindergarten through third grade teachers; however, administrators and teachers of older children regularly attend. This meeting provides a forum for all school personnel to become involved and to share any insights or concerns that they may

have with project staff working with the school, the children and the children's families. Exchange of information concerning family participation and developmentally appropriate programming has occurred. Recommendations made at these meetings are taken into consideration when developing materials or implementing programs.

One administrator likens the challenges of collaboration to a "mating dance," requiring a fair amount of give-and-take and an organizational desire to change. The Oregon Transition Project, according to the administrator, has met this challenge and has set a solid foundation for systemic change which is critical for the institutionalization of transition services.

Integrated Services.

Alaska. Integrated service delivery is well under way within the Alaska's Project P/PRIDE. Title I has rewritten the job description for the Home-School Coordinator which closely follows the Family Services Specialist position for the Transition Project. The project developed its job description from one of the Head Start agencies. In one of the demonstration schools, Title I and project staff closely coordinate their work with specific families. This includes gathering data for one another, as well as responding to specific family needs. Again, the Head Start family advocate lends assistance when the family has been a Head Start family. Another example is in the transition from Head Start to the public schools. Here the integration of Head Start and public school staff, along with families, has achieved an almost seamless system.

Arizona. There is a wealth of evidence from a variety of both qualitative and quantitative data sources that services within the three Transition schools have become more comprehensive, family-centered, and integrated. School principals and staff report that their orientation has moved from a crisis-intervention mode to being more proactive in their relationships with families. All three schools have incorporated Transition Family Advocates into their school's team approach to assisting families and children participating in the Transition Project. They share information regarding family circumstances that may be relevant in linking families with needed services, resolving problems, or identifying appropriate interventions. School support staff such as social workers, counselors, psychologists, and nurses often confer with Transition Family Advocates about effective strategies for meeting the various needs of particular families and children, as well as families in general. School personnel report a dramatic improvement in the delivery of health, mental health, and dental services since the conception of the Transition Project. All Transition children receive regular health and dental screenings and, most importantly, close follow-up so that needed treatment is accessed and received.

Illinois. Initially, Project TRANSFER, the Transition Project, was viewed as a stand-alone program. As the project's advisory and governing boards became more established, duplication of services, and even competition between programs for participants became evident. In response, the project chose an approach of integrating various funded programs to expand services to families, and to eliminate duplication of services. Integrating the project with other programs enlarged the number of staff involved in its implementation. As a result, more services and a more comprehensive program have been offered than would be possible if TRANSFER were a stand-alone program. The integration of funded programs has allowed staff to work with families as a whole and not be restricted by age, school, or programmatic barriers, thereby ensuring continuity in programming.

Nevada. Two levels of integrated service delivery have been measured in the Nevada project: integrating services at the individual level of service delivery (i.e., in working with individual families and their children) and integrating services at the school level. At the end of the first year of implementation, approximately half of the Family Service Coordinators' time was spent in contact or collaboration with teachers (18%), principals (4%), community agency staff and other individuals (4%), or in training (19%). By the end of the second year 56% of the families were receiving services through service structures jointly planned and offered by the project and school staff: parenting skills (21%), school-parent communication (12%), school involvement activities (32%) program development (1%) and adult education (2%). Evidence of this role shift for Family Service Coordinators from individual service providers to a more integrated role within the school staff as program developers included: implementation of parenting classes in conjunction with Even Start, Chapter I and school counseling staff; development of parent resource centers/libraries within the existing school libraries in conjunction with primary teachers, principals, parents and librarians; provision of on-site ESL and GED classes for parents in conjunction with the local community college, the district's ESL program staff and community agencies; planning and scheduling family nights and socials in conjunction with PTO's, teachers and parent volunteers.

Oregon. The most evident example of integrating services has been the utilization of Family Service Coordinators (FSCs) by the demonstration schools to work in collaboration with Child Development Specialists (CDSs) in assisting children and their families. Each Portland Public School has a Child Development Specialist on staff to work with children regarding social skills and problem solving techniques, among other issues. In some cases CDSs have limited contact with families. FSCs on the other hand spend considerable time working with individual families to meet their needs. The CDS and FSC work jointly to develop and provide assistance for Transition children and their parents. There is a sharing of information among individuals in these positions about any concerns or problems that the children or families may encounter. Recently, the FSCs and CDSs have worked together to provide preventive services for families, including discipline and conflict resolution workshops. According to a Portland Public School official, the roles and

responsibilities of CDSs have been changed to reflect a service provision style similar to the FSC and Transition model. Because the FSCs spend approximately 40 percent of their time at the school, it is evident why they have had such a strong impact on programming and service delivery.

Capacity Building.

Alaska. The Anchorage School District has drafted a five year plan for restructuring K-2 education which includes the key components of the Transition program. The principal change agents are seen as "the families", a "bottom-up" approach to change sustained by leadership within the public schools, Head Start and key community agencies. Parent involvement has been validated by the Alaska project - "a real leadership role from real people". This capacity building for families and for the public schools continues to build on the strengths of families and the concept of families as "first teachers". A specific example is the hiring practice of project support staff by a team composed of parents, principals, Head Start and project staff. Originally there were concerns among some about whether parents were capable of discerning the needs of the project. There is no longer a question. Some principals are now including parents in the screening process for public school staff. One of the challenges is capacity building with teachers in working with families, especially low-income families. The teachers have specifically requested additional help and training in this area.

Arizona. One of the most important aspects of capacity building within the Arizona project has been the extensive training and implementation support at one demonstration school for the Work Sampling System. This student assessment system was introduced to the three Transition schools, with joint endorsement from the evaluator and the project director, as an excellent alternative to more traditional measurement and grading methods. It is based on teacher observation and documentation of student progress and work samples through a comprehensive developmental system, including a family reporting component. Teachers at one Transition school were interested in receiving the Work Sampling training and have since adopted the system school-wide (pre-K through grade 5). In addition, all Head Start teachers in the Head Start agency have been trained and are in their second year of implementing Work Sampling. This professional development coupled with long-term support from Transition staff has resulted in a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, continuous system of student assessment that will be implemented for children at one school from preschool through grade 5. The administrative commitment from both the school and Head Start to maintain the system insure that it will continue beyond the duration of the Transition Project.

Illinois. Capacity building continues to grow, as Title 1 funds and funds from other programs have been used to build the integrated program model. One school district's policy of integrated programming has resulted in the provision of a range

of non-duplicative services. By integrating programming and resources, this district has ensured that services will survive even when funding for selected projects ends. For example, the district has used both Even Start and TRANSFER funds to serve project families. Project TEACH (birth to age 3), special education, and Title VII staff have also assisted project families. Title 1 funds have been used to support additional Family Educators and Family School Liaisons and the Club Friend programs at two target schools (Club Friend is an after school program that combines developmentally appropriate activities for young children and child development training for high school students). Likewise, a second district has used Title 1 funds to support a Family School Liaison. The effectiveness of services has earned the attention of the community; in one district, two school referenda passed in 1994.

Nevada. A major effort in Nevada, in terms of capacity building, involved a series of joint trainings and teacher exchanges between Head Start and K-3 public school teachers on such topics as developmentally appropriate practice, parent involvement, family literacy, and procedures for developing Family and Individual Transition Plans for children as they move from Head Start into kindergarten and through the third grade. One source of information related to capacity-building in depicting the capacity of *the school* to grow in the four major program component areas is the ICC (Innovation Components Checklist). In three of four component areas, the teachers have indicated growth and institutional change: family friendly schools, partnerships, and child and family education (or developmentally appropriate practice). Their comments indicate a growing awareness about the severity of family needs and the shortage of services to adequately address the full spectrum of needs, an issue that is beyond the scope of the Family Service Coordinator. This "growing awareness" on the part of teachers, resulting in a lower rating of the implementation level of the family services component is seen as evidence of capacity building. It reflects a natural developmental process as schools become sensitized to the importance of involving families in their children's education and the support families must be given to become full partners in that process.

Teachers provided the following suggestions for increasing their capacity to strengthen and support transition practices: 1) provide more opportunities for Head Start and kindergarten teachers to share and work together to develop appropriate curriculums; 2) review existing curriculum guides to make sure they meet the needs of all children; 3) increase training opportunities in "family education" that include the parent as partner in the child's learning; and 4) make kindergarten mandatory and implement the reduced ratios with kindergarten classes. Evidence of capacity building comes in small but significant packages. One of the Nevada teachers indicated that a valuable aspect of the program that she continues to use with families is the Individual Transition Plan. This tool was first introduced to her as a kindergarten teacher when she originally met with the Head Start teacher and Family Service Coordinator for all of the project children (now in first in second

grade). She continues to use it with all of her parents to help her understand their goals and to view them as partners as well as assess the progress of their children.

Oregon. There are several indications of capacity building activities currently underway in the Portland Public School district and in area Head Starts. Portland Public Schools, according to the transition demonstration schools district administrator, is beginning to re-examine its inservice offerings to include additional training in developmentally appropriate practices. They are also examining the possibility of applying Chapter I funding to enhance the CDS positions in each school to better reflect the duties of the current Head Start FSC. The district has worked hard to negotiate for increased release time for teachers to attend staff development training. Training options included identifying the needs of families, developmentally appropriate practice for elementary school children, and other topics pertinent to the transition process.

Participating Head Start programs in the Oregon Transition project have initiated a process to improve the sharing of child records and other important information between their programs and the receiving elementary schools. Thus far the three years of contact with the public schools has served to substantially improve communication among the collaborating partners.

Challenges for the Future

The five Head Start-Public School Transition Demonstration Projects that have been the subject of this analysis have experienced tremendous progress and success during the first three years of implementation. There have also been many challenges in attempting to bring about lasting and sustainable systemic change through institutional collaboration, integrated service delivery, and capacity building. The challenges discussed in this section are not specific to any one Transition Project, but rather have been identified through the evaluations to apply commonly across the five sites.

When collaboration within the five Transition Projects is examined in relation to the Melaville and Blank framework, presented earlier in this paper, it becomes apparent that some of the challenges are due to the inherent structure of the national project. Namely, the fiscal agent (i.e., the grantee) is either a Head Start or a local education agency. Evaluators have observed that programs for which Head Start is the grantee tend to be more Head Start-like in nature, with Head Start having the role of the more dominant partner. Likewise, when a local education agency is the grantee, the program is more public school-like in its management and operations and the Head Start partner is more adjunct to the program.

While tremendous strides have been made in the projects in moving toward true collaborative partnership status, some projects still have some of the characteristics of cooperative partnerships. For example, the Transition grantee might be viewed as more

responsible for project outcomes than the non-funded partner; representatives from participating organizations may be able to advocate for policy changes but may not have the power to make them; and the grantee may have a more dominant role than other partners in programmatic decision-making.

Funding has been an ongoing challenge related to capacity-building. As the project moves up through the grades, the lower grades are, in essence, rotated out of project services. For example, most projects cannot afford to continue supporting kindergarten teachers through staff development opportunities and family service services; these functions must be funded through non-project sources. With tight budgetary constraints, it has been difficult for the systems to absorb these costs. Therefore, as classrooms rotate out of project participation, they may be able to maintain no-cost practices (e.g., communication with Head Start, some developmentally appropriate practices), but many are not able to maintain family service coordinator services at the level provided through Transition funding. The temporary, and somewhat uncertain, nature of Transition funding has also resulted in some project staff leaving positions in favor of jobs that are supported by permanent funding sources.

Events and policies that are external to, and outside the influence of, Transition Projects can also have debilitating effects on programs. For example, the failure of one school district's referendum resulted in greatly increased class size, reduction in school administrative support, and a lack of the district's ability to provide substitutes so that teachers could participate in professional development offerings. In another state, kindergarten is not compulsory, resulting in obvious problems with maintaining continuity from preschool to public school. It has been difficult for a program which relies on temporary funding to exert influence upon these types of external events and policies.

Conclusions

As the Transition Projects enter their fourth year of implementation, all programs are making concerted efforts to insure that transition-like practices become institutionalized within Head Start and the public schools. These efforts include leveraging funds from other sources such as Title 1, Even Start, state monies, and private sources so that services can be provided more efficiently, effectively, and with a family-centered orientation. This work takes the commitment of substantial human resources at all levels of all the participating organizations, both vertically and horizontally. The evaluation results show that projects are well on their way to achieving systemic change, even in light of big challenges.

Virtually all federally and state funded pilot or demonstration programs now have requirements for institutionalizing innovative practices once temporary funding ends. This has resulted in tremendous budgetary pressure on participating organizations, primarily schools and social service agencies, to collaborate, integrate services, and build capacity by leveraging funds. True collaboration and sustainable change in systems will require collapsing existing organizational boundaries, relinquishing well-established turf, and

changing both philosophy and policy at local, state, and national levels. The longitudinal evaluation of the Head Start-Public School Transition Projects has provided a fertile research base for exploring the difficult work of collaboration and systemic change in real-world contexts on a national scale. The understanding that has been, and continues to be, developed through this research should have profound implications for future educational practice and policy.

References

- Abbott-Shim, M. & Sibley, A. (1994). *Assessment profile for early childhood programs (research version)*. Atlanta, GA: Quality Assist, Inc.
- Gardner, S.L. (1993). Key issues in developing school-linked, integrated services. *Education and Urban Society*, 25, (2), 141-152.
- Gottlieb, M. (1995). *A developmentally appropriate practice template: ADAPT*. Des Plaines, IL: Illinois Resource Center/OER Associates.
- Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Hall, G.E. & Hord, S.M. (1987). *Change in schools: Facilitating the process*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Jehl, J. & Kirst, M.W. (1993). Getting ready to provide school-linked services: What schools must do. *Education and Urban Society*, 25, (2), 153-165.
- Love, J.M., Logue, M.E., Trudeau, J.V., & Thayer, K. (1992). *Transition to kindergarten in American schools (Contract No. LC88089001)*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.
- Melaville, A.I. & Blank, M.J. (1991). *What it takes: Structuring interagency partnerships to connect children and families with comprehensive services*. Washington, DC: Education and Human Services Consortium.
- Seppanen, P.S., Godin, K.W., Metzger, J.L., Bronson, M., & Cichon, D.J. (1993). *Observational study of early childhood programs, final report volume II: Chapter 1-funded early childhood programs (Contract No. EALC890980)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Undersecretary.
- Whitmore, E. (1991). Evaluation and empowerment: It's the process that counts. *Networking Bulletin*, 2, (2), 1-7.